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is presented in table (5).

Table (5) T-test for Comparing the Experimental and Control Groups on Postest.

T - Critical	Two - tailed Hypothesis	d.f.	T.observed
2.000	0.05	68	2.5416

According to table (5), the observed t-value 2.5416 is larger than the critical t-value 2.000. Therefore the null hypothesis assuming that the means of control and experimental group will be equal on the posttests is rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

Conclusion

The treatment which was the application of vocabulary language games was very effective, and it has improved the Reading Comprehension of the experimental group from the pre-test to the posttests.

Pedagogical Implication

Some of the practical implications, drawn from the results of the present study, are as follows.

First playing games makes students feel involved in classroom activities. They do not sit passively to be attacked by mass of new information. They respond to the contents presented in classroom in a way that has proved, at least in this study, to be useful and understood.

Second, utilizing games after so many boring oral drills and energy draining activities revive the class and take the drudgery out of learning reading comprehension. Furthermore, a sense of competition, which is one of the major outcomes of games, arises among learners and they participate in language learning activities.

Third, games remove the strictness and formality of language learning classrooms and allow students, as one side of this instructional transaction, to fill the information gap easily. Teacher is no logner the sole power in the classroom but is a creative coordinator who knows what, why, how and when to comment on what is going on in classroom.

Fourth, to handle newly taught reading comprehension items as a main part of language, games are productive and advantageous.

English teachers ought to take games seriously and use them as teaching and reinforcing devices for presenting new reading comprehension items in classroom. Syllable designers had better modify the traditionl views on designing language learning curricula and allot a deserved part to language games. Material developers should also reckon language games in compiling new text books for language learners.

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the Persian equivalent of some difficult words since there were also some weak students in the classes.

The experimental group received the treatment, which was the vocabulaty language games. The treatment sessions took four weeks and (8 sessions) of 75 minute each. It has to be mentioned that the reseacher used the games to reinforce and fix what had already been taught. In the application of the games to the vocabulary of the passages, many important characteristics of the words such as their root, suffix, prefix, synonym, antonym, relation to other words, semantic domain, and picture for a concrete word should go under a particular scrutiny of the researcher. The games took 30-45 minutes of the class time.

Following this procedure, the researcher examined all words of the passages. then she selected the followin games:

Games

Body stretcher - Flash words - Make a sentence - Misfits _ Word building - Broken words - Bingo - Definition game - Dominoes - Word scrambles - Paired Crossword - T.V. Definition - What is in the picture? - Synonyms/ Antonyms - Triple Definition- Just a Minute - Cross word puzzle

Table (2) Means, Variances, Standard Deviations of Experimental and Control Groups on Pre-test

Group	N	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\bar{X}$	V	SD
Experimental	35	309	242.93	8.82	7.14	2.67
Control	45	304	193.51	8.68	5.69	2.38

a: 0.05, n = 35, df = 68, t - critical = 2.000

Table (2) represents the information obtained from comparing the mean scores of the two independent groups in pre-test. Both groups are about the same, concerning their degree of acquaintance with Reading

Comprehension items.

The table shows that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups regarding the subject's reading comprehension abilities without recieving and treatment. To probe these conclusions more, the means of two groups are compared through t-test. Table (3) indicates a sketch of what has just been explained:

Table (3) Comparative Table of T-observed and T- critical on the Pre-test.

T - Critical	Two - tailed Hypothesis	d.f.	T-observed
2.000	0.05	68	0.23

When the pre-test was administered, the treatment was begun in the experimental group. The teaching procedures were the same for both groups except that in experimental group the vocabulary language games were applied.

The treatment lasted for about 8 sessions. Then four weeks after the treatment, the posttest was administered and compared. In table (4), all statistical description about the posttests of control and experimental gurops are presented.

Table (4) Means, Variances, Standard Deviations of Experimental and

Group	N	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\bar{X}$	V	SD
Experimental	35	525	384	15	11.29	3.36
Control	35	461	252.97	13.17	7.44	2.72

a: 0.05, n = 35, df = 68, t - critical = 2.000

To see whether the treatment was effective or not, the means of the two tests are compared through an independent t-test.If the difference between the means is significant, it can be concluded that the treatment was effective. The result of t-test

This test aimed at controlling the proficiency level of the subjects. Out of 130 students, two homogeneous groups each consisting of 35 subjects were randomly selected as experimental and control groups.

The second testing instrument of the study, the reading section of an original form of TOEFL, was as a valid test of English language proficiency to measure the subjects' reading ability. This test which served as the pre-test and post test consisted of 5 passages. These passages altogether had 20 mutiple choice items. 30 minutes was allocated for the purpose. The reliability of the TOEFL Reading Comprehension Test computed through the KR-21 formula revealed to be 0.70.

The average readability of 20 Reading Comprehension passages of their textbook was calculated using the Fog index of readability. It was found that considering the mean and standard deviation of original TOEFL Reading comprehension passages, the average readability found for the textbooks full within ± ISD of the readability indices of the Reading Comprehension passages in TOEFL. The range of readability for the textbook turned out to be 20.79-32.53. Therefore the TOEFL test used to pre-test & post test the subjects was at the suitable level of readability for the specified population.

Procedure

To accomplish the purpose of the study the following procedure was followed:

The Michigan t test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP), a test of grammer, vocabulary and Reading comprehension was used as one part of the official Michigan test Battery by the English Language Institute. There were 100 multiple - choice items to be completed in 100 minutes. This test was employed to homogenize learners regarding their proficieny in English. The scores which were +1 and -1 standard deviation above and below the mean were considered as intermediate.

Out of 130 learners who took the test, 97 were able to meet the criteria. Then 70 learners were randomly selected and divided into two equal groups: experimental and control.

The learners were supposed to take another test as a pre-test and posttest including four reading comprehension passages each with five multiple choice questions.

Twenty items from Reading section of original TOEFL were selected and were administered to twenty students at the same level i.e. intermediate level. After obtaining the data, the reliability of the test was computed by applying Kudar & Richard's 21 formula which is based on the mean of sample and the number of item.

Following this procedure, the researcher examined all words of the passages, then she selected the followin games:

Table (1) Reliability and Validity of TOEFL Reading Comprehension Tests

Test	Reliability	Validity
TOEFL R. C.	0.70	0.71

Also the readability grade of the subject's textbook and the readability grade of test passages were calculated through Fog Index formula.

Treatment

Through a regular teaching procedure, the vocabulary of TOEFL Reading Comprehension was taught to both experimental and language by using definition/ synonym/ antonyms or some other ways elaborated in Vossoughi (1996). In some cases, it was needed to give

real-life activities and thus act as an imperus for the students to use specific language, structures, and functions in a natural setting (Miller, 1992, P. 39).

Language Games and Teaching Vocabulary

According to French Allen (1983) language teachers are responsible for creating conditions which encourage vocabulary expansion. A wise selection of games, consequently, can help students acquire English words.

Rivers (1981) has also suggested that *"games, competitions, and other activities which requir quick word recognition, grouping, matching are useful in recognition of vocabulary they have already learned."*

Vocabulary Games

Developed by Ruddiman (1993) the vocabulary game provides students with a strategy for determining the meanings of out-of-context words through an understanding of morphemes, word parts, and etymology (word origins). Though it requires the intervetion of a facilitator, the vocabulary game is designed to empower students and to encourage student responsibility for learning. And while it is intended for use in a classroom setting of 10-20 students, the strategy could be modified for use by small-sized student study groups.

Methodology

subjects

A sample of 130 subjects learning English through Streamline courses were selected from Jahad English Institute in Semnan to participate in this study. Administarting a standard original Michigan test, they were finally reduced to 70 subjects. These subjects were equally and randomly divided into two homogeneous groups representing experimental and control groups. The subjects were all female whose ages ranged from 16 to 18, the samples were all students of eleventh level in that Institute.

Design

The study followed an experimental design displaying the following characteristics: (I) Two homogeneous groups of intermediate level students were randomly selected as control and experimental groups. (II) a treatment was offered to experimental group, (III) a placebo was offered to control group (IV) two tests as pretest and post test were administered in each group.

The pre-tests were administered in the first session of the winter semester. The post tests, on the other hand, were administered four weeks after the treatment. In detail the treatment of this study which took four weeks (8 sessions), 75 minute each sessions, was the application of vocabulary language games on the Reading Comprehension of TOEFL.

The control group also recieved a placebo, which was individual, or group repetition of the words along with their explanations.

Four weeks after the treatment, a similar test was administered as a post to both groups in order to measure the effect of the treatment. Next, the data obtained from the groups were compared through t-test.

Instrumentation

The first testing instrument was the original Michigan Proficiency Test (1988). It was a test of 100 questions, 40 items of grammar, 40 vocabulary items and 4 Reading comprehension passages each with 5 questions. The time alloted was 100 minutes.

English as a second language handled with vocabulary items, but they take a teacher with a strong theoretical commitment to use them in isolation. Three types of vocabulary attack strategies are: obtaining meaning from context, from morphological analysis, and from monolingual English dictionaries, guessing vocabulary from context is perhaps the most important one. Students must be made aware of a number of language clues available to them when they are hindered by an unfamiliar word. They should realize that they can usually continue reading and obtain a general understanding of the item (Clarke & Silberstein, 1977).

Lexical complexity and Reading

The one thing that most interferes with our students' reading is poor vocabulary, and teachers have recently come to accept the fact that their students have been right all these years when they have complained about not knowing and not being taught enough words. Vocabulary study is just learning of words, item by item. Authors distinguish between vocabulary taught for production and receptive use (Twaddell, 1963; Lado, 1964; Paulston, 1976; Rivers, 1986).

In reading the emphasis conversely is on content words, but for receptive use, for the ability to recognize the meaning of a word in context, which is after all what reading is all about. But it is not plausible to make any absolute statements about teaching vocabulary for productive or receptive use in reading because some students will use words they have learned through reading, while others will not.

Language Games

Game is one of the major ingredient of language teaching in modern pedagogical curriculums and helps to relieve the language learning of unnecessarily explanatory procedures, over-domination by the teachers, and the misguided dictatorship of absolute correctness and incorrectness in language use. According to Michael Gasser and Ellyn Waldman (1979) all of the games ought to meet the following criteria:

(a) should have a goal, (b) should be governed by rules, (c) should be fun (Celce-Murcia, 1979, P. 54).

Voosooghi (1994) pinpointed another issue related to language games. Voosooghi (1994) contends: *"Playing language games, the leaners could overcome their affective filter such as the negative attitude toward learning the foreign language, and the short-attention span"*.

Steinberg (1983) referred to language games as a beneficial classroom activities and claimed that *"playing games takes the drudgery out of learning and thus, provides motivation"* (P.X).

Hossein Vossoughi & Elizabeth Clair (1994) take formality and strictness of language learning classrooms into account and propose that *"phychologically speaking, games can remove those affective filters from the learner's mind and provide them with a practical motivation and instant need to utilize linguistic items"* (P.14).

Lindsay Miller (1992) believed that there are several reasons why teachers may want to use games:

First, games relax the class and take the focus off the academic aspect of the lesson.

Second, they change the pace of the lesson and enhance the concentration of the students.

Third, using the group and pair games allow the reacher to monitor problems the students may have with the language.

Last, but certainly not the least, games are

improving the reading comprehension of intermediate students?"

To approve of the desired results on the aformentioned research question, the following null hypothesis was proposed: "The application of vocabulary language games has no significant effect on improving the Reading comprehension of intermediate students at 0.05 level of significance".

Reading

Goodman (1971) defines reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game, in which the reader reconstructs, as best as he can, a message which has been encoded by a writer as a graphic display"(p. 135). He thinks of this reconstruction as being an ongoing, cyclic process of sampling from the input text, predicting, testing, and confirming or revising those predictions, and sampling further. This definition of reading indicates that readers need not use all the textual cues and language froms; rather, they can utilize their knowledge of the world to extract the meaning of the word.

Lee (1990) stated that text-and extra-text-based factors affect reading comprehension. The principal text-based factors involved in reading comprehension are word recognition, phonemic/graphemic decoding, and syntactic feature recognition, whereas intratextual perception, prior knowledge, and metacognition are the major extra-text-based factors. And as chastain (1988) said:

"the reading goal is to read for meaning or to recreate the writer's meaning. Reading to improve pronunciation, practice grammatical forms, and study vocabulary do not constitute reading at all because reading, by definition, involves comprehension. When readers are not comprehending, they are not reading" (p. 217).

Reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among: (1) the reader's existing knowledge: (2) the information suggested by the text being read: and (3) the context of the reading situation (Wixson, Peters, Weber & Roeber, 1987, citing the new definition of reading for Michigan).

Even definitions of reading that emphasize meaning indicate that reading is activated by print. The reader must be able to translate the written words into meaningful language.

Anderson (1989, P. 189) gives a psycholinguistic model of reading:

1. Reading is an integrated process.
2. Reading has no one sequence of skills.
3. Reading is meaning centered.
4. Reading is an alternate language process
5. Reading is an active process.
6. Reading is an inexact process.
7. Function precedes form in reading.

In Smith's (1971) terms, reports Hudson (1988) *"the reader is not moving from words to meaning, but rather is moving from meaning to words"* (p. 186). The basic strategy in reading is, thus, considered to be reduction of uncertainty, with the reader touching as few bases as necessary.

Vocabulary as a Reading Skill Component

Rivers (1981) states that vocabulary can be taught. It can be presentes, explained, and included in all kinds of activities to be learned by individuals. The vocabulary we understand and the vocabulary we can use varies in nature and in quantity from one person to another even in our native language. We can help our students by giving them ideas on how to learn vocabulary and some guidance on what to learn.

Introduction

Reading is often the main goal of learners in countries where English is taught as a foreign language. Moreover, reading can be consisered as a primary source of language input, a pleasurable activity, and a means of extending one's knowledge of language.

Reading strategies are of particular importance for what they can tell us about the interaction of readers with written texts and how readers manage to do so and how these strategies are related to text comprehension. These strategies cover a wide range. They include the traditionally recognized reading skills of skimming, scanning, skipping unknown words, contextual guessing, tolerating ambiguity, reading for meaning and making inferences.

Reading is a process of word recognition, letter identification, selection of information, association of meaning to the written symbols, thereby understanding and interpreting the recieved information. (Rivers, 1968) Teaching a second or foreign language depends on many factors among which communication seems to be the major aim. This goal is achieved through listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Vocabulary is regarded as one of the common components for the above menitioned skills. Teachers of English as a second or foreign language know very well how conspicuous vocabulary is. Anderson and Richards (1977) have shown vocabulary problems to be the most important contributors to text difficulty, but they also found that there were many foreign language readers who did not have language problems, including difficulty with vocabulary, but who still found text difficult to process. They suggest that a linguistic description of a text is a necessary but no sufficient guide to the problems that readers might have with that text. Finding the best way of learning the words deeply and extensively is the common objectives of most of the studies. However, one effective way to achieve this goal is somehow neglected in the fiel, using a variety of activities such as games can reinforce the teaching points without boring the students. The present study is aimed at investigating the effect of vocabulary language games on improving student's reading comprehension, and it is a topic which, as far as the researcher is aware of, has not comprehensively been investigated yet.

Statement of the Problem

Vocabulary is a major obstacle to many Iranian students. Most of them are faced with the problem of "lack of lexical storage". They always complain about lexical problems in reading comprehension. These problems brought a new idea to the mind of the researcher, the idea of devising new techniques and activities to enhance lexical storage of the learners. One of the so called activities is the application of vocabulary language games as a complementary practice in the classroom. Many scholars (Dobson, 1972; Steinberg 1986, Vossoughi, 1994) have expressed their satisfaction in teaching by using games. On the other hand many instructors are reluctant to employ games during the teaching process. Instead time and again they insist on the boring and monotonous techniques of repetition and memorization they argue that games are childish and time killing as well as being the cause of chaos and disorder in their class.

Research Question and Hypothesis:

Owing to the mentioned problems, the following research question was proposed: "Does the application of vocabulary language games have any significant effect on

ABSTRACT

Many EFL teachers are familiar with the type of reading comprehension exercise in which students are required to read the passage and then answer a set of multiple choice questions. No matter how hard you may try to make this type of reading fun and comprehensible to the learners, after a while, you may end up with a boring reading class in which your students are not reading for comprehension not enjoying themselves, not learning new words in context, and involved in a communicative and intreactive learning activity. In fact, reading is often the main goal of learners in countries where English is taught as a foreign language. Using a variety of activities such a vocabulary language games can reinforce the teaching points without boring students. The present study is aimed at investigating the effect of vocabulary language games on improving students' reading comprehension. It is a topic which, as far as the researchers are aware of, has not comprehensively been investigates yet. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the following research question was proposed: "Does the application of vocabulary language games have any significant effect on improving reading copmrehension of EFL intermediate learners?"

In order to examine the raised question thoroughly the following hypothesis was put forward: "Vocabulary language games do not have any Effect on reading comprehension of EFL intermediate learners".

The confirmation or rejection of the hypothesis demanded an experimental research. To do so first an original Standard Michigan Test was administered to 130 female Iranian EFL students learning English through Streamline courses in Jahad English Language Institute in Semnan. Those who could score between +1 and -1 standard deviation above and below the mean were considered as intermediate. Among the above population 97 students were able to meet the criterion, then 70 subjects were randomly selected from among them and were randomly assigned into two equal groups: experimental and control. Both groups participated in the reading section of standard TOEFL test as a pre-test. The two means obtained from the pre-test were compared through t-test.

The result (t. observes = 0.23 and t. critical = 2.000) indicated that the two groups were initially homogeneous in terms of reading proficiency. Then, the treatment sessions were introduced to experimental group which lasted 8 sessions (4 weeks) and were consisted of vocabulary language games of text. At the same time, the control group also recieved a placebo, which was individual, or group repetition of the words along with their explanations. Four weeks after the treatment, the post test was administered to both groups. The post test was the standard TOEFL test which was applied as a pre-test.

The data gathered from the post test analyzed and the means of both groups again were compared through t-test. The result (t. observed = 2.541) of this comparison proved that the application of vocabulary language games to Iranian EFL intermediate learners would improve their reading comprehension abilities.

Key Words: language games, reading, comprehension

The Impact of Vocabulary Language Games on Reading Comprehension of EFL Intermediate Learners

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چکیده ٔفارسی :

بسیاری از معلمان زبان انگلیسی، با تمرینات درک مفاهیم «خواندن» که طی آن، زبان آموزان متن را می خوانند و سپس به یک مجموعه سؤالات چهار گزینه ای پاسخ می دهند، آشنا هستند. با این نوع تمرینات، هر قدر هم مفاهیم متن را برای زبان آموزان قابل درک کنیم، طولی نخواهد کشید که درس «خواندن» به فعالیتی کسل کننده بدل می شود. در این صورت درک مفاهیم صورت نمی گیرد و درس بی روح و خسته کننده باعث می شود، زبان آموز برای شرکت در فعالیت مؤثر کلاسی، شور و شوقی از خود نشان ندهد.

حال از چه راهی می توان زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان دوم را به کلاس های درس «خواندن» علاقه مند کرد؟ یکی از این راه ها به کاربردن بازی های زبانی واژگان است.

تحقیق حاضر به منظور بررسی میزان تأثیر بازی های زبانی واژگان بر پیشرفت درک مفاهیم «خواندن» صورت گرفته است. برای رسیدن به هدف تحقیق، این سؤال مورد پرسش قرار گرفت که: «آیا کاربرد بازی های زبانی واژگان، تأثیر معنی داری بر پیشرفت درک مفاهیم خواندن زبان آموزان سطح متوسطه نخواهد داشت.»

هفتاد نفر دانش آموز دختر، از میان ۱۳۰ دانش آموز که دوره های آموزشی "Streamline" را می گذراندند انتخاب و به یک گروه ۳۵ نفری کنترل و یک گروه ۳۵ نفری آزمایش تقسیم شدند. به هر دو گروه «آزمون استاندارد میشیگان» برای سنجش مهارت های عمومی داده شد، میانگین نمرات دو آزمون در دو گروه از طریق تی تست مورد مقایسه قرار گرفت و نتایج نشان داد که هر دو گروه از توانایی یکسانی در مهارت های زبان برخوردار هستند. سپس در گروه آزمایشی بازی های زبانی واژگان ارائه شد و گروه کنترل نیز به روش سنتی، به تکرار و حفظ واژگان پرداخت. نتیجه آزمایش تفاوت قابل ملاحظه ای را نشان داد و بدین ترتیب، فرضیه صفر رد شد. به عبارت دیگر، بازی های زبانی واژگان در پیشرفت درک مفاهیم «خواندن» بسیار مؤثر است.

کلید واژگان: بازی های زبانی، خواندن، درک مفهوم